

AL JIHAD FIL ISLAM

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Contents

Chapter page

1. The Meaning of Jihad
2. The Revolutionary Creed of Islam
3. A World Revolution
4. The Status of the Dhimmis (Non-Believers)
5. Under the Protection of an Islamic Government
6. Imperialism versus Islam

INTRODUCTION

“Jihad” is one of those terms, like “Fatwa”, which has been adopted and distorted almost beyond recognition by the media. Indeed, many Muslims are unaware of the full depth of the meaning of Jihad; at times it seems that we prefer to maintain our blinkered view of this fundamental teaching of Islam.

In this short book, Mawlana Mawdudi spells it out for us, loud and clear. The speech on which this book is based was given in 1939, on the eve of the Second World War, but it cannot be regarded as a kind of historical relic. Although the phraseology may be that of the situation of the day, when communism was still in its ascendancy, the points which Mawdudi makes are as relevant and important now as they were half a century ago.

Anyone wishing to know more about the Islamic understanding of Jihad (as

opposed to the media version) will find a worthy introduction to the subject in this book.

(Huda Khattab, January 1995)

Chapter 1

THE MEANING OF JIHAD

The word “Jihad” is usually translated into English as “Holy War”, and for a long time the connotations have implied “religious mania”. The word “Jihad” conjures up images of wild-eyed, bearded religious fanatics, brandishing swords, attacking the “Infidels” wherever they find them, and forcing them, virtually at knife-point, to recite the Kalimah*. It is as if the artists have drawn a picture with masterly strokes, and inscribed beneath it the legend: “The History of this Nation is a Tale of Bloodshed”.

The irony is that the painters of this picture are none other than our so-called “benefactors” who have themselves been engaged in an extremely unholy war for centuries. They themselves present us with an image of robbers who - armed to the teeth with all manner of deadly weapons, have set upon the world, pillaging it for sources of raw materials, new markets for their trade, and new lands to conquer and colonize - all of which provide fuel for their ever-burning fires of greed. They fight not for the sake of Allah or their religion, but to satisfy their lust and hunger. For them, it has always been sufficient excuse to invade a land if that land is known to contain valuable mines, or if it can be exploited as a market for their manufactured goods, or if some of their surplus population can be settled there.

In the absence of any other excuse, they would even consider it a crime on the part of a country if it happened to exist en route to a country they had already conquered, or which they intended to conquer. Nowadays, it is more subtle: “Democracy” must be upheld, by direct intervention if necessary - except, of course, when the democratic will of the people opts for Islamic rule...!

Asia, Africa, Australia, Europe, the Americas... Which part of the world has been

spared the bloodbath resulting from this unholy war? We are still witnessing their dark deeds and their horrific aftermath, on a global scale.

But they are highly skilled - let us give credit where it is due! They have managed to paint such a dark and gruesome picture of us that their own true colours have been overshadowed and obscured. Yet we should be stunned by our own simplicity and gullibility. When we saw this picture of ourselves painted by the foreigners, we were so overwhelmed by it that we never thought to look beyond it to see the face of the painter. Instead, we assumed the role of apologists, pleading that we knew nothing of war, but were like the mendicants and wandering mystics. We claimed that our only concern was religious debate and to win people over to our faith. We admitted that in the past we may have fought in self-defence, but we had now renounced all that. We declared that Jihad referred only to the battle of words, waged with tongues and pens; sabre-rattling and gun-shooting were the privilege of others.

Kalimah - The Muslim declaration of faith: There is no god but Allah, Muhammad is the Messenger of Allah.

Causes of Misunderstanding about Jihad

But if we put such political consideration aside and look at the matter from a purely academic point of view, we will find two basic, but major misconceptions which lead non-Muslims and Muslims alike to fail to understand the real nature of Jihad fi Sabilillah ("Holy War for the Cause of Allah"). The first misunderstanding is that they assume Islam to be a "Religion" in the accepted (western) sense; the second is that they take Muslims to be a "Nation" in the technical sense. These two misconceptions have not only confused the concept of Jihad, but have distorted the picture of Islam as a whole, and completely misrepresented the position of the Muslim people.

In common (western) speech, the word "Religion" means nothing more than a hotch-potch of beliefs, prayers and rituals. If this is what "Religion" means, then it should indeed be a private affair. You should be free to entertain any belief and worship any deity which your conscience is able to accept. If you are a particularly

ardent devotee of this kind of “Religion”, then go preach it to the entire world, and engage in debates with the protagonists of other religions.

There is no reason for you to take up arms - do you want to convert people to your faith by killing them?! We have to admit that if you regard Islam as a “Religion” in this sense of the term, if Islam is indeed a conventional “Religion”, then the necessity for “Jihad” cannot be justified.

Similarly the term “Nation” refers to no more than a homogenous group of people who have joined together as a distinct entity on the basis of certain fundamental and shared traits. A group of people who thus attain nationhood according to this definition can take up arms in two cases: either when another group attacks them with the intention of depriving them of some of their lawful rights, or when they themselves wish to launch an attack seeking to usurp another group’s rights. There is an unassailable moral justification for taking up arms in the first case (although some saintly persons have declared even armed self-defence to be a sin). But launching an armed attack in order to snatch away people’s lawful rights can be justified by no-one except the worst dictators. Even statesmen of vast empires* like those of Britain and France do not openly and blatantly justify this course of action.

What does Jihad Actually Mean?

If Islam is a “Religion”, and Muslims are a “Nation”, according to the commonly accepted understandings of these terms, then Jihad - despite the fact that it has been dignified with the title

“The Best of all Prayers” in Islam - becomes a meaningless and useless term. But Islam is not the name of a mere “Religion”, nor is Muslim the title of a “Nation”. The truth is that Islam is a revolutionary ideology which seeks to alter the social order of the entire world and rebuild it in conformity with its own tenets and ideals. “Muslims” is the title of that “International

Revolutionary Party” organized by Islam to carry out its revolutionary programme. “Jihad” refers to that revolutionary struggle and utmost exertion which the Islamic Nation/Party brings into play in order to

* N-B. Mawdudi was speaking in 1939. To achieve this objective, like all revolutionary ideologies, Islam shuns the use of current vocabulary and adopts a terminology of its own, so that its own ideals may be clearly distinguished from common ideals. The word “Jihad” is one such example of the unique vocabulary of Islam. Arabic words for “war”, such as Harb were rejected in favour for the word Jihad, which basically means “struggle”, although it has a wider and more forceful connotation than the English word.

The nearest correct meaning for “Jihad” in English would be: To exert one’s utmost efforts in promoting a cause”.

The question arises: why was this new term preferred and used to the exclusion of the previously-current words? The answer to this question is simply that the word “war” was – and still is - used to refer to struggles between nations and states, wars which are waged for the achievement of individual or national self-interest. The motives behind these conflicts are devoid of principles, and seek only to serve certain individual or collective purposes.

Since the Islamic struggle does not belong to this category, Islam shuns the use of the word “war” altogether. Islam has no vested interest in promoting the cause of one nation or another; the rule of this state or that over the world is irrelevant. The sole interest of Islam is the welfare of mankind. Islam has its own ideological standpoint and practical programme to carry out reforms for the benefit of mankind. Islam wishes to do away with all states and governments which are opposed to the ideology and programme of Islam. The purpose of Islam is to set up a state on the basis of this ideology and programme, regardless of which nation assumes the role of standard-bearer of Islam, and regardless of the rule of which nation is undermined in the process of the establishment of an ideological Islamic state. Islam requires the earth - not just a portion, but the entire planet - not because the sovereignty over the earth should be wrested from one nation or group of nations and vested in any one particular nation, but because the whole of mankind should benefit from Islam, and its ideology and welfare programme.

It is to serve this end that Islam seeks to press into service all the forces which can bring about such a revolution. The term which covers the use of all these forces is

‘Jihad’. To alter people’s outlook and spark a mental and intellectual revolution through the medium of speech (*) and the written word is a form of Jihad. To change the old tyrannical system and establish a just new order by the power of the sword is also Jihad, as is spending wealth and undergoing physical exertion for this cause.

“For the Cause of Allah” - the Essential Condition

But the “Jihad” of Islam is not a mere “struggle” - it is a “struggle for the cause of Allah” ‘This is the essential condition of “Jihad” in Islam. This expression, Jihad fi Sabilillah,

(* - Sayyid Mawdudi gave this speech in 1939, before the advent of television. In the 1990’s it is worth noting that the media - audio and video tapes, radio, television, electronic mail, bulletin boards, etc. - are all powerful weapons which may be employed in Jihad. Editor.) is another part of the specific Islamic terminology referred to the above. The literal translation of this phrase is “Struggle in the Way of Allah”. This literal translation misled people of limited intellects (including so-called, experts”!)

into thinking that “Jihad in the way of Allah” entailed the forcible conversion of other people to the Islamic faith.

But in the terminology of Islam, the phrase Jihad fi Sabilillah has a wider meaning: any act or deed which is done for the collective well-being of mankind, by a person who has no vested interest in this world (Dunya), but seeks only to earn the pleasure and favour of Allah, is regarded in Islam as a deed done “in the way of Allah”. For example, if you give something away in charity, hoping to receive some material or moral reward in this world, such as money, goods or a favourable reputation, your deed would not be regarded as an act done “in the way of Allah”. But if your desire and intention is to please Allah by assisting a poor person, then you will indeed have acted “in the way of Allah”. Hence the term “in the way of Allah” is reserved only for those deeds which are undertaken with perfect sincerity, without any thought of them being a means to selfish ends, deeds which are done on the basis that benefiting other human beings is a means

to earn the pleasure of Allah, and the sole purpose of human life is to please the Creator of the Universe.

This condition, of being “in the cause of Allah”, has been attached to Jihad for the same reason.

It clearly implies that when a person or group emerges to bring about a revolution and establish a new order in conformity with the ideology of Islam, there should be no selfish motives behind any acts done or sacrifices made for the Cause. The aim should not be to displace a ruler and then occupy the vacant throne, to replace Caesar with Caesar. The objective of the struggle should be completely free from the taints of selfish motives and ambitions for wealth, fame and glory. All efforts and sacrifices should be directed towards achieving the one and only goal, namely the establishment of a just and equitable social order among human beings, and the only reward in view should be to gain the favour of Allah.

The Holy Qur'an says:

“Those who believe fight in the cause of Allah, and those who reject Faith fight in the cause of Evil (al-Taghut)...” (Al-Qur'an 4:76)

The word “Taghut” is derived from Tughyan (deluge, flood), which carries the meaning of “crossing the limit”. When a river “crosses the limit” by bursting its banks, there is a flood.

Similarly, when man “crosses the limit” by transgressing all lawful boundaries, and strives to dominate others or take more than is his due, this is described as “fighting in the way of Taghut’.

In contrast, “fighting in the way of Allah” refers to the struggle for the establishment of Allah's just order in the world. The fighter in the way of Allah aims to abide by the law of Allah himself, and to enforce it among other human beings. In connection with this, the Holy Qur'an says:

“That Home of the Hereafter We shall give to those who intend not highhandedness on earth. And the End is (best) for the righteous.” (Al-Qur'an 28:83)

It is reported in the Hadith that a man asked the Prophet (SAAS):

“What does ‘war in the cause of Allah’ imply? One man may fight for material gain; another may fight in order to gain a reputation for valour; a third may fight for vengeance, or for national honour. Which of these men is a fighter ‘in the way of Allah’?” The Prophet (SAAS) said: “None of them. Only he fights in the way of Allah who seeks no other purpose than the glorification of Allah.”

In another Hadith, the Prophet (SAAS) said:

“If a man engaged in battle entertains in his heart a desire to gain no more than a rope to tie his camel with, then his reward (for fighting in Jihad) will be forfeited.”

Allah accepts only those deeds which are done for the purpose of seeking His pleasure, to the exclusion of any and all personal or collective objectives. Hence, according to Islam, the condition “for the cause of Allah” is of utmost importance in relation to Jihad. Every living creature strives and struggles - sometimes to achieve some personal goal, but often merely to survive. But the most important - indeed the most basic - ideal of the revolutionary doctrines of that “Revolutionary Party” known as Muslims is to expand all the powers of the body and soul, life and possessions, in the fight against the evil forces of the world; not so that, having annihilated them, we should step into their shoes, but so that evil and contumacy may be eradicated and Allah’s Law enforced on earth. This is the significance of Jihad fi Sabilillah, Jihad for the cause of Allah.

Chapter 2

THE REVOLUTIONARY CREED OF ISLAM

In order to understand more fully why Jihad is needed and what its objectives are, we must briefly explore the Revolutionary Creed which Islam teaches. That Creed, in a nutshell, is this: “O people! Adore (worship) your Guardian-Lord, Who created you...”

(Al-Qur’an 2:21)

The call of Islam is not addressed only to workers, land-holders, peasants or

industrialists; it is directed to the entire human race. Islam addresses all human beings as equal: no one person can regard himself or be regarded as a “demi-god”, demanding worship and unconditional submission from fellow human-beings. All of mankind should be devoted to the worship of one God, and as such stand on a level of equality.

“...Come to common terms as between us and you: that we worship none but Allah; that we associate no partners with Him; that we erect not, from among ourselves, Lords and patrons other than Allah. If then they turn back, say: ‘Bear witness that we (at least) are Muslims (bowing to Allah’s Will)’.” (Al-Qur’an 3:64)

This was the call for a universal and complete revolution. It proclaimed loudly: “Sovereignty belongs to no one except Allah.” No one has the right to appoint himself ruler of men, to issue orders and prohibitions on his own authority. To acknowledge the personal authority of a human being as the source of commands and prohibitions is tantamount to admitting him as a partner in the Power and Authority of Allah (Shirk - polytheism). This is the root of all evils in the universe.

Allah has instilled the correct spirit in man, and has shown him the right way of life.

The reason why human beings deviate from this straight path is that they forget Allah and consequently forget their own real worth. This state of affairs inevitably encourages some persons, classes or dynasties to claim Divine rights for themselves and, taking undue advantage of their might, they reduce the people at large to the status of their inferior creatures. Other persons, forgetting Allah and their own selves, accept as “divine” those who have assumed might and power on earth. They acquiesce in the right of the powerful man to issue commands, and their own obligation to carry out those commands with servile devotion. This is the root cause of tyranny, conflict and unlawful exploitation in the world, and this is the target towards which Islam directs its first assault. Islam issues a clarion call:

“And follow not the bidding of those who are extravagant, who make mischief in the land, and mend not (their ways).” (Al-Qur’an 26:151-152)

“...nor obey any whose heart We have permitted to neglect the remembrance of

Us, one who follows his own desires, whose case has gone beyond all bounds.”
(Al-Qur’an 18:28)

“...Behold! The Curse of Allah is on those who do wrong! - those who would hinder (men) from the path of Allah and would seek in it something crooked...”
(Al-Qur’an 11:18-19)

Islam poses the question:

“ ... Are many lords differing among themselves better, or the One True God, Supreme and Irresistible ?” (Al-Qur’an 12:39)

If you do not devote yourself to the One God, Allah, you will never be free from bondage to these small, false “gods”; in one form or another they will gain power over you and will inevitably create strife:

“ ... Kings, when they enter a country, despoil it, and make the noblest of its people its meanest...” (Al-Qur’an 27:34)

“When he turns his back, his aim everywhere is to spread mischief through the earth and destroy crops and progeny. But Allah loveth not mischief.” (Al-Qur’an 2:205)

There is no room in this small book to embark on a full discussion of the implications of these

Ayat. The important point to note here is that Islam’s call for belief in One God and devotion to Him alone was not an invitation to follow a religious creed in the same conventional sense as the call of other creeds. In fact, it was a call to join a movement of social revolution. Its main impact fell on those classes who had reduced common humanity to the status of slaves, namely the religious hierarchy of priests or clerics, the political hierarchy of kings, nobles and ruling classes, and the economic hierarchy of usurers, landholders and monopolists. In some instances, these ruling powers had openly declared themselves to be lords besides Allah. They demanded obedience and devotion from the people as their hereditary right or privileges due to class.

These are the people, such as Pharaoh, who brazenly declared:

“No god do I know for you but myself.” (Al-Qur’an 28:38)

“I am your Lord Most High.” (Al-Qur’an 79:24)

“I give life and death.” (Al-Qur’an 2:258)

“Who is greater in strength than us?” (Al-Qur’an 41:15)

In other places, these powers have created false gods in the form of idols, often housed in temples, in order to exploit the ignorance of the common people. By controlling these idols and temples, they have hoodwinked people to comply with their claims to divine rights.

Hence the call of Islam - to turn away from heresy, polytheism and idolatry, and to offer worship and devotion to One God alone - came into direct conflict with the interest of worldly government and those classes which either support its authority or benefit from it. It is because of this that whenever any of the Prophets (upon all of whom be peace) proclaimed:

“O my people! Worship Allah: you have no other god but Him.”

(Al-Qur’an 11:84) the government of the day hastened to bar his way with all its might, and the degenerate exploiting classes opposed him fiercely. The call of the Prophets has never been a merely metaphysical, spiritual call; it was and is a charter for social revolution. Hence the ruling classes also detected the menace of a political upheaval in the very first pronouncement of a prophet.

The Characteristic Feature of the Revolutionary Creed of Islam

There is no doubt that all the Prophets of Allah, without exception, were Revolutionary

Leaders, and the illustrious Prophet Muhammad (SAAS) was the greatest Revolutionary Leader of all. But there is something which distinguishes these Revolutionary Leaders, who worshipped Allah alone, from the general, run-of-the-mill, worldly revolutionaries: these worldly revolutionaries, however

honest and sincere their intentions may be, can never attain to a perfect level of justice and moderation.

The revolutionaries of the world either rise from the oppressed classes themselves, or stand up for the rights of the oppressed. Hence they can only look at things from the viewpoint of those particular classes. As a result, their outlook can never be impartial and entirely humane. On the contrary, they will be heavily biased in favour of one class, and full of hatred and resentment towards the other. The remedy which they prescribe for tyranny is itself tyrannical, and in effect vindictive. They are unable to shake off their feelings of jealousy, resentment and revenge, and thus cannot plan an equitable and balanced social order which will ensure the well-being of all members of the society.

In striking contrast to this, whatever the severity of the persecution to which Prophets (AS) were subjected, whatever the agonies they and their companions suffered at the hands of their oppressors, the Prophets (AS) did not allow their personal feelings to influence the course of their revolutionary movements. They acted under the direct Guidance of their Lord. Since Allah is above all human passions, and has no particular connection with any group or class within human society, nor bears any grudge towards any other group or class, so under His direct Guidance the Prophets (AS) regarded all matters with impartial justice, in order to find ways which would secure the well-being of all persons. They strove to devise a system in which each individual might feel secure and content to remain within the limits of his rights, in which every person might fully enjoy his lawful rights, and in which a perfect balance might be struck in the relationship between man and man, and between man and society.

For this reason, the Revolutionary Movement launched by the Prophets (AS) never assumed the characteristics of a class war. They did not bring about social reconstruction so as to secure the dominance of one class over another, but to establish a just pattern of society which would afford equal opportunities to all human beings for self-improvement and the attainment of spiritual and material excellence.

The Need for, and Objective of, Jihad

We cannot, in this brief essay, cover the details of the social order envisaged by Islam. That must wait for another occasion, insha-Allah. Here, I wish only to make the following point: Islam is not merely a religious creed or a name for a collection of a few acts of worship. It is a comprehensive system which seeks to annihilate all evil and tyrannical systems in the world, and enforce its own programme of reform, which it deems best for the well-being of mankind.

Islam addresses its call for effecting this programme of revolution, reconstruction and reform not just to one nation or group of people, but to the whole of humanity. Islam itself calls upon all those classes which unlawfully oppress and exploit the people; its call is addressed even to kings and nobility, to affirm faith in Islam and to keep themselves within the lawful limits laid down for them by their Lord. Islam tells them that if they accept this just and righteous system, they will attain peace and salvation. This system harbours no animosity against any human being.

Our animosity is directed against tyranny, strife and immorality, and against the attempt of the individual to transgress the natural limits and attempt to seize for himself that which is not apportioned to him by Allah.

Those who affirm their faith in this ideology become members of the party of Islam and enjoy equal status and equal rights, without distinctions of class, race, ethnicity or nationality. In this manner, an International Revolutionary Party is born, to which the Qur'an gives the title of Hizb-

Allah* (literally, "The Party of Allah"), otherwise known as the Ummah (Nation) of Islam. As soon as this party is formed, it launches the struggle to attain the purpose for which it exists.

The rationale for its existence is that it should endeavour to destroy the hegemony of an un-Islamic system, and establish in its place the rule of that social and cultural order which regulates life with balanced and humane laws, referred to by the Qur'an by the comprehensive term "the Word of Allah". If this party fails to strive to effect a change in the government and establish the Islamic system of government, then it loses its very *raison d'être*, for this party exists for no other

purpose. There is no other purpose for this party but to strive for the cause of Allah. The Holy Qur'an states only one purpose for the existence of this Ummah:

"You are the best of Peoples, evolved for mankind, enjoining what is right, forbidding what is wrong, and believing in Allah." (Al-Qur'an 3:110)

Those who propagate religion are not merely preachers or "missionaries"; they are the functionaries of Allah (so that they may be witnesses for the people, and it is their duty to wipe out oppression, wrongdoing, strife, immorality, arrogance and unlawful exploitation from the world by force of arms. It is their objective to shatter the myth of the divinity of "demi-gods" and false deities, and to reinstate good in the place of evil.

(1) "And fight them on until there is no more tumult or oppression, and there prevail justice and faith in Allah." (Al-Qur'an 2:193)

(2) "...Unless you do this (protect each other), there would be tumult and oppression on earth, and great mischief..." (Al-Qur'an 8:73)

(3) "It is He Who has sent His Apostle with Guidance and the Religion of Truth, to proclaim it over all religion, even though the Pagans may detest (it)." (Al-Qur'an 9:33)

This name has been adopted by some groups in the Muslim world. The terminology is, however, Qur'anic, and thus universal in application - Editor.

Hence this party is left with no other option but to seize the authority of state, for an evil system takes root and flourishes under the patronage of an evil government, and a pious cultural order can never be established until the authority of government is wrested from the wicked and transferred to the hands of the reformers. Apart from reforming the world, it becomes impossible for the Party itself to act upon its own ideals under an alien state system. No party which believes in the validity of its own ideology can live according to its precepts under the rule of a system different from its own. A man who believes in communism could not order his life according to the principles of communism whilst living in Britain or America, for the capitalistic state system would bear down on him and

it would be impossible for him to escape the power of the ruling authority. Likewise, it is impossible for a Muslim to succeed in his aim of observing the Islamic pattern of life under the authority of a non-Islamic system of government. All rules which he considers wrong, all taxes which he deems unlawful, and all matters which he believes to be evil, the civilization and way of life which he regards as wicked, the education system which he views as fatal... all these will be so relentlessly imposed on him, his home and his family, that it will be impossible to avoid them.

Hence a person or a group are compelled by the innate demands of their faith to strive for the elimination of the rule of an opposing ideology, and for the setting up of a government which follows the programme and policies of their own faith - for under the authority of a government which professes inimical doctrines, that person or group cannot fully act upon their own convictions. If those people evade their duty of actively striving for this purpose, the clear implication is that they are hypocrites, and not sincere in their faith.

“Allah give you grace (O Muhammad!) Why did you grant them exemption until those who told the truth were seen by you in a clear light, and you had proved the liars? Those who believe in Allah and the Last Day ask you for no exemption from fighting with their goods and persons. And Allah knows well those who do their duty. Only those ask you for exemption who do not believe in Allah and the Last Day, and whose hearts are in doubt, so that they are tossed in their doubts to and fro.” (Al-Qur’an 9:43-45)

In these words, the Qur’an has given a clear and definite decree that the acid test of a party’s true devotion to its convictions is whether or not it expends all its resources - wealth and life – in the struggle to install its faith as the ruling power in the state. If you put up with the authority of an inimical doctrine in the state, this is proof positive that your faith is weak and false. The natural - and only possible - result of this is that your nominal devotion to the faith of Islam will also eventually wear off. To begin with, you will endure the rule of an inimical system with disdain, but gradually you will learn to live with it, until your contempt will turn to a liking for this corrupt rule. Finally, you will become a pillar of support for

the establishment and maintenance of the state rule of an opposing ideology. You will then expend your life for the installation and upholding of un-Islamic doctrines in the place of Islam. Your own resources will be utilized to resist the establishment of Islamic ideology as the ruling power in the State. At this stage, there will be nothing to distinguish you from the Kuffar except the hypocritical profession of devotion to Islam and the deceitful title (of "Muslim"). The Holy Prophet (SAAS) clearly stated this fact in the Hadith:

"I swear by Allah, who has power over my life, you will have to enforce good and curb evil, and arrest the hand of the evil-doer and turn it by force to do good, otherwise the inevitable consequences of the natural law of Allah will be manifested in such a way that the inclinations of the hearts of the evildoers will influence your hearts, and like them, you too will be damned."

Chapter 3

A WORLD REVOLUTION

It must by now be obvious that the objective of the Islamic Jihad is to eliminate the rule of an un-Islamic system, and establish in its place an Islamic system of state rule. Islam does not intend to confine this rule to a single state or to a handful of countries. The aim of Islam is to bring about a universal revolution. Although in the initial stages, it is incumbent upon members of the Party of Islam to carry out a revolution in the state system of the countries to which they belong, their ultimate objective is none other than a world revolution. No revolutionary ideology which champions the principles of the welfare of humanity as a whole - as opposed to upholding national interests - can restrict its aims and objectives to within the limits of a particular country or nation. The goal of such an all-embracing doctrine is naturally bound to be world revolution.

Truth cannot be contained within geographical borders. Truth demands that whatever is right on this side of the river or mountain must also be right on the other side. No portion of mankind should be deprived of the Truth. Wherever mankind is being subjected to repression, discrimination and exploitation, it is the duty of the righteous to go to their aid. The same concept has been enunciated in

the Holy Qur'an:

"And why should you not fight in the cause of Allah and of those who, being weak, are ill-treated (and oppressed)? - Men, women and children, whose cry is: 'Our Lord!

Rescue us from this town, whose people are oppressors..." (Al-Qur'an 4:75)

Furthermore - notwithstanding the ethnic and national divisions of mankind - human relations and connections have a universal significance, so that no state can put its ideology into full effect until the same ideology comes into force in the neighbouring states. Hence it is imperative, for reasons both of the general welfare of humanity and for its own self-defence, that the Muslim Party should not be content just with establishing the Islamic system of government in one territory, but should extend its sway as far as possible all around.

The Muslim Party will inevitably extend the invitation to citizens of other countries to embrace the faith which holds out the promise of true salvation and genuine welfare. At the same time, if the Muslim Party commands enough resources, it will eliminate un-Islamic governments and establish the power of Islamic government in their place.

This is the same policy which was implemented by the Holy Prophet (SAAS) and the Rightly- Guided Khalifahs (RA) who succeeded him. Arabia, where the Muslim Party was founded, was the first country to be subjugated and brought under the rule of Islam. Later, the Holy Prophet (SAAS) sent messages to surrounding states, inviting them to accept the faith and ideology of Islam. Where the ruling classes of these countries declined to accept this invitation to adopt the True Faith, the Prophet (SAAS) resolved to take military action against them. The Battle of Tabuk was the first in this series of military actions.

When Abu Bakr (RA) assumed the leadership of the Muslim Party after the death of the Prophet (SAAS), he launched an invasion of Byzantium and Persia, which were under the dominance of un-Islamic governments. Later, 'Umar (RA) led this war to its victorious conclusion. The citizens of Egypt, Syria, Byzantium and Persia initially took these military actions to be evidence of the imperialist policy of the

Arab nation. They believed that like other nations, the Arabs had set out on a course of enslaving other nations under the yoke of imperialism. It was based on this misconception that they marched out under the banners of Caesar and Chosroes to fight the Muslims. But when they discovered the revolutionary ideology of the Muslim Party, it dawned on them that the Muslim armies were not the champions of nationalistic aggression; far from having nationalistic objectives, they had come with the sole aim of establishing a just system; their real purpose was to annihilate the tyrannical classes who had assumed “divine” powers and were trampling their subjects under the patronage of despotic rulers and kings. When they realized all this, the sympathies of these downtrodden people turned towards the Party of Islam. They began to forsake their allegiance to the flags of their own monarchs and, when they were conscripted by force and made to fight against the

Muslims, they had no heart for the battle. This was the main cause for the astounding victories won by the Muslims in the early period. It also explains why, after Islamic government had been established in their countries, and they had seen the social system of Islam in action at first hand, they willingly joined this international party and became, in turn, the upholders of its ideology, and set out to other lands to spread its message.

The terms “Offensive” and “Defensive” are irrelevant

If you carefully consider the explanation given above, it will become clear that the terms “offensive” and “defensive”, which are usually applied to definitions of warfare, are not at all applicable in the case of Islamic Jihad. These terms are relevant only in the context of wars between nations and countries, for technically speaking, the terms “attack” and “defence” can only be used with reference to a country or a nation.

When an international party, on the other hand, emerges with a universal faith and ideology, and invites all peoples as human beings to embrace this faith, and admits men of all nations into its fold as equals, and strives only to dismantle the rule of an opposing ideology and replace it with a system of government based on its own ideology -then in this case, the use of technical terms such as “offence”

and “defence” is not appropriate. The division of Islamic Jihad into “offensive” and “defensive” is not permissible. Islamic Jihad is both offensive and defensive at one and the same time. It is offensive because the Muslim party attacks the rule of an opposing ideology, and it is defensive because the Muslim Party is constrained to capture state power in order to protect the principles of Islam in space-time forces. As a party, it has no home to defend: it upholds certain principles which it must protect. Similarly, this party does not attack the home of the opposing party, but launches an assault on the principles of the opponent. The objective of this attack is not to coerce the opponent to relinquish his principles, but to abolish the government which sustains them.

Chapter 4

THE STATUS OF THE DHIMMIS (NON-BELIEVERS) UNDER THE PROTECTION OF AN ISLAMIC GOVERNMENT

This differentiation between the principles of the individual and the government which sustains those principles also answers the question regarding the devotees of other faiths and ideologies in the case where an Islamic government has been established in their countries.

Islamic Jihad does not seek to interfere with the faith, ideology, rituals of worship and social customs of the people. It allows them complete freedom of religious belief, and permits them to act according to their creed. However, Islamic Jihad does not recognize their right to administer affairs of the state according to a system which, in the view of Islam, is evil. Furthermore,

Islamic Jihad also forbids them to continue with such practices under an Islamic government if those practices are detrimental to the public interest according to Islam.

For example, as soon as the Ummah of Islam seizes state power, it will outlaw all forms of business transacted on the basis of usury or interest; it will not permit gambling; it will curb all forms of business and financial dealings which contravene Islamic Law; it will shut down all brothels and other dens of vice; it will make it obligatory for non-Muslim women to observe the minimum standards of

modesty in dress as required by Islamic Law, and forbid them to go about displaying their beauty as in the Days of Ignorance; it will impose censorship on the film industry.

With a view to ensuring the general welfare of the public and for reasons of self-defence, the Islamic government will not permit such cultural activities as may be permissible in non-Muslim systems but which Islam regards as detrimental and even fatal to moral fibre.

If a person feels inclined, on hearing this, to level charges of intolerance against Islam, he should consider the fact that no creed in the world has shown more tolerance to the devotees of other faiths than has Islam. In other places, the followers of other faiths are so repressed that, finding existence unbearable, they have no other choice but to emigrate. Islam, however, provides full opportunities for self-advancement to the people of other faiths, under conditions of peace and tranquillity. It displays such magnanimity towards them that the world has yet to come up with a parallel example of tolerance.

Chapter 5

IMPERIALISM VERSUS ISLAM

At this point, I must reiterate that, according to Islam, only the war which is fought in the service of Allah - a war to fulfil the will of Allah - may be regarded as Jihad. When an Islamic government is established at the conclusion of such a war, the Muslims are categorically forbidden to assume the despotic powers which the former tyrants had previously inflicted upon the people. A Muslim, as a Muslim, must not fight to establish his own personal rule, or to turn the people into his slaves, or to build himself an earthly Paradise by appropriating the hard-earned wealth of the people. This is not a war to fulfil the Will of Allah, but a war to fulfil the will of Shaytan; Islam has no use for this kind of government.

The Jihad of Islam is a kind of hard labour; it is not something which is done for pleasure or "for fun". It is nothing but the sacrifice of life, wealth and carnal desires. When this Jihad achieves victory, and an Islamic government is established, the responsibilities of an honest and sincere

Muslim Head of State are so enorour that he is denied both sleep at night and rest during the day. He is not entitled to indulge in the pleasures and privileges which usually come with worldly authority, and which are the reason why many make the bid to seize power in the first place. A

Muslim ruler is not a superior being, distinct from or more privileged than the common man. He cannot sit on a throne of "Highness"; he cannot command anyone to prostrate before him; he cannot make the slightest move without the sanction of Islamic Law; he has no power to shield any of his relatives or friends, let alone himself, against a lawful claim from the lowliest man in the community; he cannot take even an inch of land from anyone else without justification. He is forbidden, by law, to draw half-a- penny more from the public exchequer as his salary than is necessary for a Muslim of average means to live on.

This God-conscious Head of State cannot occupy a magnificent palace, or live in pomp and glory, or buy means of entertainment and pleasure. At all times he is aware of the awesome fact that one day he will be severely called to account for every deed which he has committed in this world. If it is found that he received even a single penny in illicit gains, or snatched the tiniest strip of land from anyone by force, or exhibited the slightest hint of pride or arrogance, or exercised tyranny and injustice in a single instance, or succumbed, even for one moment, to carnal pleasures, he will be condemned to endure the most dreadful torture.

The world knows no greater fool than the man who would dearly love to gain the world and yet is willing to bear the burden of state responsibility under Islamic law. The worldly position of a small shopkeeper is far better than that of the ruler of an Islamic state. The small shopkeeper earns far more in a day than the Khalifah, and he sleeps better at night. The Khalifah does not earn as much, and he cannot even enjoy peace at night.

This is the fundamental difference between Islamic and non-Islamic systems of government. In a non-Islamic state, the ruling classes establish themselves as "divine" powers, and exploit the resources of the country for their own personal gain. In striking contrast to this, the governing class in an Islamic state offers service without any thought of personal benefits, and secures no greater

advantage for itself than that which is available to the common man. Compare the scale of salaries received by civil servants under an Islamic government with those received by civil servants under modern imperialist governments, or those which were historical contemporaries of the Islamic state, and you will see that there is a huge difference, in spirit and nature, between the conquests of Islam, and the world-wide dominance of imperialism.

In the Islamic state, the governors of Khurasan, Iraq, Syria and Egypt were paid a lesser amount of money than the salary drawn today by a low-grade inspector. The first Khalifah, Abu Bakr (RA), ran the administration of a vast empire for a monthly salary of 100 rupees.* Umar's (RA) salary did not exceed 150 rupees per month, even though the coffers of the Islamic state were, by this time, filled with the wealth of the two major empires of the known world. It may appear that both Imperialism and Islam alike conquer countries, but there is an essential difference between the two; the gap between them is as vast as the space between the heavens and the earth. As the poet said:

"Both fly in space, yet the world of the Eagle is far removed from that of the Crow." This, then is the true meaning of Jihad, a term which we hear much. If you were to ask me now,

"Where is that Islam, that Islamic Party and the Jihad whose ideology you have outlined to us?

Why can we find no trace of them among the Muslims of today's world?" - I would beg you not to ask me this question, but instead to ask it of those who have diverted the Muslims away from their real mission, and towards nonsensical matters such as talismans, incantations, superstitious rituals, supererogatory offerings, and the like. Ask it of those who have prescribed short-cuts to salvation and reform, who have told you that we can achieve our objective by counting rosary beads or praying to one who is asleep in his grave! Ask it of those who have concealed the tenets, ideology and objectives of Islam, and engaged the Muslim mind in debates over the most insignificant aspects of Faith, or visiting tombs, and other minor issues, all of which has caused the Muslims to lose all sense of their true identity, the purpose of their creation, and the true character

of Islam.

If they fail to deliver a satisfactory answer, then put this question to the wealthy, the officials and the ruling authorities, who profess faith in the Qur'an and the Holy Prophet (SAAS), but believe that they owe no more to the injunctions and guidance of the Qur'an and Sunnah than the holding of gatherings to recite the Qur'an from cover to cover, or to celebrate the birthday of the Prophet (SAAS), or even sometimes just to praise Allah for the beauty of His verse. May Allah forgives them and us!

But when it comes to the enforcement of the Islamic Law and the practical introduction of Islamic reforms, these gentlemen regard themselves as totally free from responsibility. In fact, their souls are unprepared to accept the restraints and bear the burden of duty imposed by Islam. They are advocates of an all-too-easy salvation.

* Rupees - The currency used in Pakistan. Currently the exchange rate is approximately 35 Rupees to one US Dollar - Publisher.